

1. A method for filtering electronic messages, comprising:  
examining a first electronic message from a sender to a supervised client;  
determining whether the sender has been approved by a supervisory client to send electronic messages to the supervised client; and  
preventing receipt of the first electronic message by the supervised client if the sender has not been approved by the supervisory client.
2. The method according to claim 1, further including sending a second electronic message to the supervisory client requesting approval for receipt of the message by the supervised client.
3. The method according to claim 1, further including sending a second electronic message to the supervisory client requesting approval for the sender to send messages to the supervised client.
4. The method according to claim 3, wherein the second electronic message is a forwarded version of the first electronic message.
5. The method according to claim 1, further including providing a screen display enabling the supervisory client to approve the first electronic message and/or the sender.
6. The method according to claim 1, further including storing a control list containing a list of approved senders for the supervised client.
7. The method according to claim 1, wherein the first electronic message corresponds to an E-mail message.
8. The method according to claim 1, wherein the first electronic message corresponds to an instant message.

9. A method for filtering E-mail messages, comprising:

examining a first E-mail message sent by a sender and addressed to a first E-mail client;

determining whether the sender has been approved to send messages to the first E-mail client by a second E-mail client;

processing the first E-mail message by the second E-mail client to enable message approval and/or sender approval; and

forwarding the first E-mail message to the first E-mail client upon approval of the first E-mail message.

10. The method according to claim 9, further including processing the first E-mail message to enable reading of subsequent E-mail messages sent from the sender.

11. The method according to claim 9, further including filtering E-mail messages with a Sieve filter.

12. The method according to claim 9, further including managing a control list of approved senders for the first E-mail client.

13. The method according to claim 9, further including processing the first E-mail message by appending information to the processed message indicative of message and/or sender approval.

14. The method according to claim 13, further including appending one or more X-lines to a header of the first E-mail message.

15. A method for approving E-mail messages, comprising:
- identifying a sender of an E-mail message to a first client;
  - determining whether the E-mail message is from a sender contained in a control list;
  - forwarding the E-mail message to a second client if the sender is not in the control list;
  - enabling a second client to review the E-mail message;
  - enabling the second client to approve the E-mail message and/or add the sender to the control list; and
  - forwarding the E-mail message to the first client.
16. The method according to claim 15, further including filtering the E-mail message with a Sieve filter.
17. The method according to claim 16, further including attaching one or more X-lines to the E-mail message indicative of message and/or sender approval.
18. The method according to claim 15, further including adding the sender after approval to the control list.
19. The method according to claim 15, further including providing a screen display enabling the second client to approve the E-mail message and/or the sender.

20. An E-mail filtering system, comprising:

a first account associated with a first user having a first filter coupled to a control list for determining whether incoming E-mail messages are from senders contained in the control list; and

a second account associated with a second user having a second filter for determining whether incoming messages were forwarded from the first account, wherein forwarded messages and/or senders approved by the second user are forwarded to the first account for message access by the first user and for addition of the approved senders to the control list.

21. The system according to claim 20, wherein the first filter includes a Sieve filter.

22. The system according to claim 20, wherein the second account further includes a control folder for holding messages forward from the first account for approval.

23. A method for filtering instant messages, comprising:

examining an instant message from a sender to a supervised client;

determining whether the sender has been approved by a supervisory client to send the instant message to the supervised client;

requesting approval from the supervisory client for sending the instant message to the supervised client if the sender has not been approved; and

sending the instant message to the supervised client upon approval by the supervisory client.

24. The method according to claim 23, further including requesting approval from the supervisory client for the sender to send subsequent instant messages to the supervised client.

25. The method according to claim 24, further including adding the sender to a control list associated with the supervised client upon approval of the sender by the supervisory client.

26. The method according to claim 23, further including controlling availability to other clients of an online status indication of the supervised client.

26. The method according to claim 23, further including maintaining a control list containing approved senders for the supervised client.

27. An electronic communication system, comprising:

an instant messaging service including

a plurality of session servers into which clients can log on to the system;

at least one message server for routing instant messages between the

clients; and

a control module for examining an instant message sent by a first one of the clients to a supervised one of the clients to determine if the first client has been approved by a supervisory client to send instant messages to the supervised client.

28. An electronic communication system serving a plurality of clients, comprising:

an ISP system including an IM proxy and associated control module for interfacing with an IM service for examining an instant message sent by a first one of the clients to a supervised one of the clients to determine if the first client has been approved by a supervisory client to send instant messages to supervised client.